GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4694
ANSWERED ON:23.04.2003
BLINDNESS AND TUBERCULOSIS PROGRAMMES
RAGHUNATH JHA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government launched various programmes under the National Disease Control Programme like blindness and tuberculosis long time back;

(b) if so, whether the Government have not achieved the desired results despite these programmes to contain the said diseases in the country; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE(SHRI A. RAJA)

(a): Yes, Sir. National Programme for Control of Blindness since 1976 and National Tuberculosis Control Programme since 1962 are being implemented in the country.

(b)&(c): The prevalence of blindness has reduced from 1.49% (1986-89) to 1.1 % (2001-2002) against target of 0.3% increase in life expectancy, inadequate services in difficult areas and new emerging eye problems like glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy are reasons for limited success under the programme.

Reasons for limited success under previous National Tuberculosis Control Programme include:

- Inadequate budget and insufficient managerial capacity.
- Shortage of drugs
- Emphasis on x-ray diagnosis resulting in inaccurate diagnosis
- Poor quality sputum microscopy
- Multiplicity of treatment regimens.

In order to overcome the above short comings a Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) was launched in 1997.

Against the targetted cure rate of 85% of new sputum positive cases, treatment success rate has increased from less than 40% in the previous programme to more than 80% in the RNTCP.The present coverage of RNTCP is more than 600 million population and it is envisaged to cover the entire country by 2005.